



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TOURISM ADVISORY TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

**Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251
APPROVED MINUTES**

PRESENT: John Holdsworth, Chairman
Andrew Chippindall
Kathy Duley
Scott Eubanks
Richard Hayslip
Allan Henderson
Taryl O'Shea
Susan Potje
Sandy Schenkat
Fred Unger

ABSENT: Kate Birchler, Vice Chair

STAFF: Karen Churchard
Steve Geiogamah
Rose Rimsnider
Brent Stockwell
Mary Murphy-Bessler
Cheryl Sumners

GUESTS: Bill Walton
Valeri LeBlanc, PLACES Consulting
Rachel Sacco, SCVB

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Noting the presence of a quorum, Chairman Holdsworth called the meeting of the Scottsdale Tourism Advisory Task Force to order at 8:07 a.m.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 27, 2016 REGULAR MEETING AS PRESENTED. TASK FORCE MEMBER POTJE SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF TEN (10) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR BIRCHLER WAS ABSENT.

4. Approval of Tourism Advisory Task Force Annual Report

Karen Churchard, Director, stated that the annual report was updated as requested by the Task Force to include more information regarding biking and the community foundation.

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE UPDATED 2015 TATF ANNUAL REPORT. TASK FORCE MEMBER POTJE SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF TEN (10) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR BIRCHLER WAS ABSENT.

5. Approval of Amended Tourism Advisory Task Force Bylaws

Chairman Holdsworth reported that the bylaws were amended as discussed at the last meeting.

TASK FORCE MEMBER DULEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDED TOURISM ADVISORY TASK FORCE BYLAWS. TASK FORCE MEMBER POTJE SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF TEN (10) TO ZERO (0). VICE CHAIR BIRCHLER WAS ABSENT.

6. Tourism Development & Marketing Strategic Plan - Year 3 Action Plan

Chairman Holdsworth actively encouraged all Task Force Members to join at least one of the working groups, and asked them to recommend individuals outside the Task Force who can join the various groups to add their expertise and expand the knowledge base.

Valeri LeBlanc, PLACES Consulting, briefly reviewed the history of the Tourism Development & Marketing Strategic Plan, and provided updates on each of the working groups.

- Arizona Central

Ms. LeBlanc said Arizona Central has been on hold for a while. Without a location, there can be no project. Three components were included in the first phase of the plan, and two of them were supposed to have been achieved by June 16, but there is no chance of that happening. Holly Street Studio has been looking at various locations, and a much stronger sense of the project has emerged from that experience. Chairman Holdsworth

noted that Holly Street is scheduled to provide a report on their final recommendations at the April 27 TATF meeting.

Ms. LeBlanc said a big part of Arizona travel is the touring vacation. About half of the visitors to the state are on this type of a trip. Scottsdale gets some of them, but nowhere near its share. Arizona Central is intended to fill a void by providing the touring vacationer with an exciting launching point for that kind of trip, and in doing so, bring more people to downtown Scottsdale who might not otherwise visit.

Brent Stockwell explained that Holly Street is looking at all of the public spaces in the downtown and is putting together options for how their uses might work together. The Task Force will make a recommendation to City Council which will be reviewed during their May 10 work study session. Many tracks are coming along in parallel, but no decisions have been made yet. Chairman Holdsworth added that the funding mechanisms will be discussed once the Council makes a decision.

Mr. Stockwell said following the October 27, 2015 City Council work study session, the Acting City Manager made Arizona Central a priority. It is moving along as quickly as possible. City Council has created space in their schedule to address it before the summer break. Holly Street is evaluating successful models from around the country. Because time is of the essence, City Council will be looking at proposals that can be implemented immediately, in addition to longer term projects.

- World Class Biking

Ms. LeBlanc said Scottsdale has a number of biking assets that are not connected and are removed from the visitor experience. The goal of this working group is to make these assets seamless and a bigger part of Scottsdale's identity. By marrying biking to a strategy of pervasive interpretation of place, visitors will get a better sense what it is all about. Possible routes have been explored throughout the city. A bike rental kiosk would allow visitors to pick up bikes from a central place and take these interpretive trails. Good mapping will be necessary; several models from around the country have been studied. Visitors will be guided to bike-friendly businesses so they can feel comfortable about where they are going. One bike enthusiast has identified all the best bike paths to different Cactus League stadiums. The Transportation Department is exploring the possibility of bike sharing, and is in the process of implementing a gold standard biking infrastructure.

Task Force Member Duley stated that the first bike path is almost ready to launch. The signs have been made and the City is getting ready to install them. It has been named the Mountain Vista Wrap, and will take people around downtown, pointing out the different mountain ranges in the area and revealing their history.

- Downtown

Ms. LeBlanc said the Downtown Working Group got off to a slow start, and went through a few permutations along the way. The current priority is working with the City staff to move forward with the Tourism related Downtown Economic Feasibility Study RFP, and to support the consulting team. The RFP has been issued and applicants have been interviewed. The analyses will help the City determine how to best allocate resources to

achieve the best returns. Another initiative is to build leadership support for the community foundation, including elements to support downtown management. Chairman Holdsworth said numerous discussions have been held on this subject, and the best option appears to be to cooperate with the Arizona Community Foundation. Their CEO has indicated that he would be willing to support Scottsdale's efforts to create a foundation should City Council decide it to be an appropriate funding method. There is no doubt that some of the Task Force's plans will require great sums of money, and multiple funding options will be necessary.

- Events and Happenings

Ms. LeBlanc said three different groups started off focusing on different sized events and happenings. After the first year they decided it was better to work together. The first initiative was to hire entertainers to supplement what the City made available for that purpose. Another initiative has been to support the development of a new, more effective Events Ordinance. The third initiative was to develop three large-scale events for the shoulder seasons. An RFP was issued to solicit information from the public on ideas. Some business modeling has been done. The Webb Report helped planners gain a better understanding of the situation. The working group is evaluating an events organizer to recruit and manage events of all sizes.

Task Force Member Schenkat felt that the Webb Report should have relied on more recent events for their comparative examples instead of using long established events. Ms. LeBlanc replied that the long-term successes are useful for understanding how they impact communities. Their models can help shape what Scottsdale pursues. Ms. Churchard clarified that the report used long-term events to provide an overview of how sponsorship models can be arranged. She said two concepts emerged from the Webb Report, a bike festival and a Cool World festival centered on the theme of sustainability. The TDC had a work study session last week and one of the recommendations that emerged from that discussion was to hire an events coordinator, either internally or externally, who can proactively work to bring events to Scottsdale.

Task Force Member Unger inquired about the number of people who come to visit Scottsdale rather than attend an event. Ms. LeBlanc said the Longwoods Report revealed that 4 percent of Scottsdale visitors come for a city vacation, 4 percent stay at a resort, 4 percent come for golf, and 4 percent for gaming. Of these categories, the one with the most growth potential is city vacations. That is why the downtown strategies can make a big difference.

Task Force Member Potje said the Events and Happenings Working Group has been very mindful of the Scottsdale brand. The underpinning of the Cool World festival is Indian Bend Wash, the creation of which represented a pivotal moment in Scottsdale's history. That and the bike festival are designed to make sure that Scottsdale remains a place that people want to visit to see something special.

- Generational Change

Ms. LeBlanc said this topic has been very challenging, but the working group has been successful. The Millennial generation currently comprises the largest travel group. In general, their income is lower than demographics that Scottsdale has traditionally relied

on, but it will grow. The next market has to be built. Without City support, the working group put together a website using all volunteer labor.

Task Force Member Chippindall said Millennial travelers are among the highest spending groups when it comes to travel. The James Agency helped put together the website and now the working group is reaching out to additional partners who see the value in what is going on. Ms. LeBlanc noted that Millennials are not interested in traveling somewhere because they were told to; they want to travel for an experience. They do not want to be sold on a trip, they want to discover it. The website is arranged like a discovery portal that lets people share what they like about Scottsdale. The photography and design are spectacular.

Task Force Member Schenkat asked whether the entertainment district plays into the working group's efforts. Task Force Member Chippindall responded that the entertainment district is a necessary component of the downtown, but for what the working group is trying to do, which is to cultivate an interest in events and happenings, it is not a factor. Chairman Holdsworth added that visitors do not come to Scottsdale to visit the entertainment district, which is frequented mostly by locals. Task Force Member Unger disagreed, saying he has noticed many visitors coming specifically for the bars during the off season. Task Force Member Henderson agreed that visitor numbers are substantial. Task Force Member Chippindall said the working group was adamant about not focusing on the entertainment district. They are far more interested in creating events like Cool World that will leave visitors feeling better than when they arrived.

Task Force Member Eubanks asked whether Generation X profiles the same way as Millennials do. Chairman Holdsworth said that they do in this regard. The term Millennials has been used out of expediency by the Task Force, but the focus does cross generational lines.

Task Force Member Unger noted that many people older than 25 are moving to and living in downtown. Those residents could embrace the evolution of the entertainment district where a broader set of demographics would feel comfortable there, like they do in places like Bourbon Street or Rush Street. He felt these residents should be included in the process of creating the downtown plan.

- Indian Bend Wash

Chairman Holdsworth said part of the Task Force's responsibility is to understand the needs of the community when it comes to tourism. Cooperation is key. Being able to accept other people's views, while not necessarily agreeing with them, is also important. Much good work has gone into the past two years, but many of the topics need to be completed. Some of the items in the plan are big ticket items that will not be completed in the short term, but TATF can help City Council by identifying the long-term goals and laying the foundation for them.

Task Force Member Schenkat said the Tourism Development Commission agreed at their last meeting to improve communications with the City Council and the Task Force. Chairman Holdsworth said he regularly speaks to Chairman Scholefield, and Ace Bailey represents the TDC at Task Force meetings, but he welcomed further interactions. Ms. Churchard noted that the TDC has set up four of their own working groups and

would welcome TATF participation in them. Staff is discussing the best way to manage these cross connections without violating the open meeting laws. Mr. Stockwell reported that City Council is requiring that the TDC seek their approval before forming those working groups. The Task Force operates under slightly different circumstances, but staff will sort out the details so that work can get done within the parameters of the state and city regulations.

Task Force Member Unger said the gallery district, like many parts of downtown, is in dire need of help. At the pace things are proceeding, it could be another year before anything is put in place that is dramatic enough to make a difference. If the whole downtown gets behind something, City Council will be less likely to shelve the idea for more study. Chairman Holdsworth said the TATF has options to implement part of the overall recommendations at an upcoming work study session. Mr. Stockwell added that staff is trying to move as quickly as possible while also involving as many people as possible.

Ms. LeBlanc said the plans for downtown have the same kind of broad reach that Indian Bend Wash had. She introduced Bill Walton, who has been described as the father of that project. Mr. Walton served on the City Council and as the Planning Director. He has also provided his perspectives on long-term change to the Generational Change Working Group.

Bill Walton said planning should be for every citizen in the community. The entertainment district has missed that point, and has to change. Scottsdale has to be a place that young people can and want to live in, not just visit. The areas adjacent to the McDowell corridor include many of the original tract homes that sold in the 1950s and 60s. If remodeled, these houses would make good starter homes for young people. Loloma is the preferable site for Arizona Central because it would give Scottsdale the opportunity to revitalize adjacent neighborhoods, which would help downtown tremendously. Areas like Old Town Scottsdale typically have life cycles of about 30 years before they have to be rethought. That time has passed and something has to be done about it very soon. If the streets and signs had not been remodeled decades ago, there would be no Old Town today. Downtown merchants have been doing things the same way for many years and are prepared to fight anyone who tells them they have to change. Scottsdale will not have a vibrant downtown without 24-hour residents. Even then it will take a while.

Ms. LeBlanc inquired about the influence of citizens in creating change. Mr. Walton responded that every City Council needs help from citizens to get anything done. It will be harder today than it was decades ago, because Scottsdale is essentially three different cities now.

Ms. LeBlanc asked about transportation concerns. Mr. Walton said that long-term transportation issues in Scottsdale will likely require a concerted effort to resolve. The north is entirely different than the middle and the south. Nobody imagined that the Airpark would someday have 60,000 jobs. The McDowell Corridor has the potential to be something wonderful, but it will take a great deal of cooperation between the City, the neighbors, and the developers, who will have to become partners. Everyone will have to give up something. People, who live in apartments, if serviced properly, do not have to rely on cars, but the area was developed as strip commercial and will have to transform.

Ms. Leblanc asked whether Indian Bend Wash was developed as a fully formed idea, or if it revealed itself over time. Mr. Walton said that when he moved to Scottsdale in 1963 there was only one swimming pool available for recreation. He felt that the city needed parks and there was no better place to put them than Indian Bend Wash. It flooded often. People were using it to grow corn. The turning point for the project was the 1972 flood, when enough people began to support a bond issue to address water management. This gave the City enough money to acquire necessary easements. The density that owners lost in the wash was given back on their developable property. City Council formed a committee, studied the idea of a park system along the wash and determined that it was feasible, and that Bermuda grass would stay in place even after a flood. The Army Corps of Engineers wanted to build a 150-foot wide, 25-foot deep concrete channel there, like the Los Angeles River. The community unified behind the greenway idea instead, and it became a reality. Mr. Walton described it as the greatest park in the country.

Ms. LeBlanc said Edwin Markham's poem *Outwitted* could serve as inspiration for mending the divisions in Scottsdale and for defining how people can better work together. Scottsdale has a great origin story that demonstrates what has been and can be done when they do.

7. Special Event Ordinance and Administrative Processes

Cheryl Sumners, Events Manager, reported that City Council passed the Special Event Ordinance with three changes from the draft that was reviewed by the TATF and the TDC. The ordinance will go into effect on July 1. In the meantime, staff will be busy putting internal processes into place. Work has already begun on the development of a user guide that will incorporate information from all City departments affected by special events. A draft of that document should be ready in May for review. Chairman Holdsworth offered to convene a special meeting of the Task Force should extensive feedback become necessary.

Task Force Member Eubanks asked whether there will be a public outreach effort for the user guide. Ms. Churchard explained that the first draft will be distributed to Council, TATF, and the TDC and be made available on the internet. There will be no public outreach meetings, but citizens will have about two weeks to submit comments.

8. Strategic Implementation Plan Budget

Karen Churchard said staff reviewed the strategic plan expenditures to date, identifying all of the items to which funds have been allocated. City Council approved a \$2 million budget to implement the tourism plan over five years. To date, \$625,000 has been expended. The balance for FY 2015/16 is \$41,444. At some point the Task Force will need to return to the Tourism Development Commission to draw out additional funding. Money is available for events, infrastructure and other opportunities within the plan once the Task Force decides on the best course of action. Chairman Holdsworth asked the working groups to discuss what budgetary amounts they think might be required to execute items within the plan over the course of the next fiscal year.

9. Staff Updates

Ms. Churchard said photos of Scottsdale from the winners of a photo contest will be used to decorate window storefronts in downtown.

Ms. Churchard reported that request for proposals were issued for the Downtown Tourism-Related Economic Development Feasibility Study. Five responses were submitted. They were evaluated and all five were interviewed by multiple City departments. Once the selection is made, a group will be assembled to manage the study as it moves forward. The vendor will evaluate all the different studies that have taken place for tourism, transportation, economic development, downtown character and others, and from that develop growth scenarios for downtown. A public outreach effort will incorporate citizen input on what they would like to see happen with downtown. An analysis will determine the financial commitment that will be required. Finally, the vendor will provide between three and five different funding structures that the City could use to fund the plan. It is anticipated that the vendor will start work in May, and the process could take at least six months to complete.

Chairman Holdsworth inquired about the Task Force's participation. Ms. Churchard responded that the Task Force will be represented in the group that will be assembled to help move the process forward. Task Force Member Unger felt that two months was a long time to wait to get the project rolling, and would prefer that the vendor start working by mid to late April. Ms. Churchard said the process could be sped up, but City Council will need to be made aware of it.

Task Force Member Chippindall expressed concern about the City entering into another study when the need to do something immediately has been made abundantly clear. Chairman Holdsworth noted that the Task Force asked for the study to be done nearly two years ago, but it took an inordinate amount of time to get the RFP through the City process. Task Force Member Chippindall said a cyclical economic downturn in the near future could jeopardize implementation of the plan. Chairman Holdsworth said the public process takes time, and there is no way around that. Mr. Stockwell responded that staff is trying to accelerate everything as much as possible. Even though it did take two years to issue the RFP, this study would coincide with Holly Street's work. Task Force Member Unger proposed a recommendation that the vendor be selected by April 1 so they would be able to interface with Holly Street before the April 27 presentation. Mr. Stockwell said the Task Force and City Council would have to provide feedback before they could proceed.

Task Force Member Potje inquired whether any of the proposed initiatives could move forward immediately. Ms. Churchard said the Tourism Development Commission came out with four short-term objectives: to improve communications with the City; to proactively pursue new events; to review event program criteria; and to leverage relationships. They have assigned Commissioners to these tasks and have requested Task Force representation. A CIP project to install electrical outlets for ambient lighting was placed in the bed tax budget and is awaiting City Council approval. City Council moved four CIP projects related to downtown into the high priority category, and will consider them for approval in late April. Those four projects, totaling \$5.9 million, are: street lighting primarily for Marshall Way; a public restroom on Main Street; sidewalk improvements throughout downtown; and the Second Street bike path connection.

10. Identification of Future Agenda Items

The next scheduled meeting is April 27, 2016.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 p.m.

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